Lessons our War Office has got to Learn, page 1708.

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IT'S ONLY A RUMOUR!

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ROYAL AND SOCIETY NEWS

Exclusive to "Modern Life."

Secret History of the Anglo-Franco-Russian Alliance. What it means, and why we entered into it.

Up till now the inner meaning of the new Treaty of Offensive Alliance between this country, France and Russia has not been made public. All that has so far transpired is that the three countries are to continue to fight Germany until they mutually agree to cease doing so. The papers, from the *Times* to the *Express*—which is a long way!—had plenty of time to ascertain its hidden diplomacy, as the Treaty appeared in all the Sunday papers before coming out in the dailies. None of the leader-writers were keen enough to discern the wonderful diplomatic *coup de guerre* which Sir Edward Grey evolved for this country at short notice. But every Britisher should realise what the most famous Treaty of this century—or any other, for that matter—means to Britain and her colonies. The Treaty was, of course, the result entirely of circumstances. In fact, it may almost be called a panic Treaty, the results of which are by no means sure to produce all that is anticipated. The conditions which resulted in the evolution of the Treaty must be clearly adumbrated.

* * *

How a Humiliating French "Peace" was Averted.

Within one month of Germany declaring war upon France and Russia, the forces of the Kaiser were before Paris! It is childish to blind oneself to that fact. France, in her extremity, had appealed to England for a supporting force, and 120,000 men were sent to the front under Field-Marshal Sir John French. Owing, alas! to the weakness of the French, the British Expeditionary Force was only able to take care of itself, and to prevent its own annihilation as it retired rapidly towards the French capital at the appalling rate of twenty-five miles a day—such a retreat, it may be added, as the world has never before witnessed. Now, it is supposed by all the leader-writers that France then appealed for the written guarantee of England and Russia that the two great Allies would continue to support her, and that they loyally did so. This is nonsense. What really took place was as follows:

* * *

Absolute Necessity to us of France as our Battle-ground.

France, in her dire extremity, *was appealed to by England* to sign the Treaty, Russia following the lead of King George. The reason for this is that France may remain the battleground between Germany and Britain until peace is signed. Britain, which went to war to save Belgium from extinction, could not select her battleground in the neutral country she is protecting. So long as Germany's fleet remains in the Baltic she is immune from British attack, as no British admiral dare risk his fleet being blown to smithereens in the mine-choked waters of the Skagerrack. While Italy, Switzerland, Denmark and Holland remain neutrals, we are practically barred from active operations against the German Empire, unless France be "in it" with ourselves, and willing for her six hundred miles of territory to be made the scene of the probable five-years-war that is impending.

* * *

Sir E. Grey Gets Us Out of a Terrible "Corner."

I hear that President Poincaré at first jibbed at the Treaty, as peace with Germany would be preferable to ruination. The President was reminded by Sir Edward Grey, however, that the French army had only been saved from annihilation by Sir John French's undaunted troops, and that it was but fair that France should make some return, as we were not under written obligations to support France against Germany, and, as a matter of fact, did not do so with troops until the violation of the neutrality of Belgium compelled King George to send the Kaiser an Ultimatum.

It is also said that Sir John French was instructed to withdraw the British Expeditionary Force unless President Poincaré assented to the Treaty, and, in the end, Sir Edward Grey scored. And when it is realised that a peace made by France would mean that country's absolute evacuation by foreign troops, British as well as German, and that the Germans would then be free to attempt the invasion of England in force via Belgium, it will be spontaneously recognised that Sir Edward Grey has got this country out of a terrible "corner." I have no hesitation in saying that the statesman who got the Anglo-Franco-Russian Treaty for this country in 1914 is the greatest Englishman on earth.

* * *

Austrian Emperor's Well-merited Humiliation.

"I am spared nothing!" said old Francis Joseph of Austria when they brought him the news that his heir-presumptive was murdered! And forthwith the old curmudgeon, who has nothing but his age to his credit, proceeded to "get even" with the Archduke's supposed assassins, the rulers of Servia! And it is not the least satisfactory aspect of the present crisis that the Emperor has lived to suffer all the humiliation that comes from the utter confusion of his troops in the war he created. The Emperor attached a tremendous importance to the life of the heir to the Dual-Monarchy, though the life of Francis Ferdinand was of no more value than that of the meanest soldier in Austria, when there are so many other Hapsburgs ready to step into his shoes, and do the job as well as he did it! Without rancour or vindictiveness, I say that Francis Joseph's chagrin is God's own punishment, and I sincerely hope that Tsar Nicholas will enter Vienna in state as the Humbler of the Hapsburgs, just as Napoleon I. entered it a hundred years ago!

* * *

How Francis Joseph Heartlessly Jilted a Bavarian Princess.

Francis Joseph was never a "model" monarch. All his life he has derived a quite spurious kudos through having been in action at Sadowa; but, when it came to marrying, he did not mind breaking a young Princess's heart, so long as his own instincts were satisfied. Having got betrothed to Princess Marie of Bavaria, he went on a journey to Munich as the betrothed of that lady, but, upon seeing her younger sister, refused to take his seat beside his betrothed, and insisted upon sitting next to Elizabeth. Francis Joseph stabbed his betrothed bride to the heart in the most callous and cruel manner, and though, of course, they let him wed the more beautiful Elizabeth Wittelsbach, he treated her with absolute cruelty, and she was only able to escape permanently to a suite of

"My husband and I never disagree. We have only one mind between us."
"Yes, I noticed that he had lost his before he proposed to you."

rtments in the Hofburg entirely "on her own," after discovery that Francis Joseph was engaged in a son with a well-known Viennese countess.

* * *

Why the Emperor Always Refused King Edward's Invitations.

The Empress Elizabeth's subsequent friendship with Captain "Bay" Middleton down at Combermere in Cheshire, is supposed in Society to be the reason the old Emperor never accepted any of King Edward's kind invitations to London, where his late Majesty freely offered the Austrian Emperor all the delights of a state visit to the Guildhall, and an immense review at Aldershot, not to speak of some of the best of the deer-stalking in Scotland, of which the Emperor was very fond—that is, of course, of the Austrian variety of stalking!

* * *

Bells and Orange Blossoms.

Wedding bells continue to clang right merrily in the family of Lord Clinton. A fortnight ago I told the story of the Dowager Lady Clinton's rush down to Salop in a motor-car, when the trains had been stopped through the Ultimatum to Germany, whereby her Ladyship nearly missed her son's hurried wedding, while but two days before the Dowager had married her youngest daughter to Captain Morrison-Bell in Town. Now another of the charming Clinton girls is to be hustled into matrimony, and before these lines are in print she will probably be the wife of a khaki-clad hero of the war. Under this orgie of marryings in the Clinton family there is a secret design of a highly romantic character. As we pointed out on Sept. 5th, the Clintons, who have been in the peerage as Barons of England for nine hundred years, always die out in the male line every century. Their unfortunate tendency to run to women would have meant the extinction of the Clinton peerage centuries ago, but for its "special remainder" to women.

"Now's the Time!"

Lord Clinton's family are no better off to-day than ever. Women only stand between a famous barony, which has got to its twenty-first bearer, and extinction. Lord Clinton himself has only daughters; the late Lord Clinton had six daughters; and three daughters of the previous Lord Clinton survive to-day. All these ladies are heirs-presumptive to the oldest coronet in Britain, should the men-folk fail of heirs. Now, it is well-known that in war-time nearly all the children born are boys, and if the Clinton title is to be saved to the family of Hepburn-Stuart-Forbes-Trefusis—now's the time!

Hence the hustled marriage of Miss Harriet Trefusis "by special license" in Salop on the day of King George's Ultimatum to the Kaiser; the wedding of Miss Trefusis's brother Bob at Holy Trinity Church, Brompton, two days later; and immediate arrangements being made for the eldest brother's (Lord Clinton's) only unmarried daughter's marriage to the Hon. John Bowes-Lyon, the brother of Lord Glamis, of the Scots Guards, and second son of the Earl of Strathmore.

* * *

Romance Which "Would Have Happened In Any Case."

As to this latter romance, it would have happened "in any case," as things between Lord Strathmore's son and Miss Fenella Trefusis have been ripening for a long time. They would have been married already, only the lady was shy, and didn't like the idea of it. They have known each other since childhood, and though Miss Fenella is no longer a flapper, being of the mature age of twenty-five, she loves her freedom, and had thoughts, moreover, of settling down in Devonshire, as her newly-married sister is doing as the wife of Captain Morrison-Bell, and "near her own people." For the Clintons are nowadays Devonshire folk, although their old place in Aberdeenshire, Fettercairn, is still occasionally visited by them.

Proudest Of Our Feudal Nobility.

The Strathmores and Clintons have many things in common. They are two families who have been associated in a variety of ways throughout the history of this country for five or six hundred years. They are the proudest of our feudal nobility, and were old when the Cecils of Salisbury, Godolphin-Osbornes of Leeds, Cavendish-Bentincks of Welbeck, and other important people were tinkers and tailors! And, in this generation, the Clintons and Strathmores are linked by a keen family friendship, which has been cemented by Lord Strathmore and Lord Clinton's next brother in the Scots Guards.

* * *

The Course of True Love.

In times of peace the Clintons are all married with the ceremony and stateliness which befits antiquity and Norman blood. In the ordinary way Lord Strathmore's daughters would be in the string of noble bridesmaids who would follow Miss Fenella Trefusis to the altar, as they did her sister four and a-half years ago, when she married Harry Fane of the Coldstreams. It was whispered then that Lord Glamis's brother had "popped the question" to the bride's sister, as she had just come of age, and looked simply scrumptious in her cloud of soft blue chiffon and mauve draperies, caught up with bunches of satin roses.

* * *

Lady Enid Fane's Bad Start "In Harness!"

Through her only sister's marriage to Lady Anne Fane's son, the newest bride in the Clinton family becomes related to pretty Lady Enid Fane, whose premarriage romance I told in detail but a week or two ago, the Fanes, of Boyton Manor, in Essex, being descended from the first Earl of Westmorland, the ancestor of Lady Enid's father. Lady Enid, by the way, had a bad start on her married career, being nearly killed, with her bridegroom, in a motor-car, while careering over the countryside with honeymoon absorption, regardless of sharp turns and "dangerous bends!"

* * *

The Kaiser to be Dethroned.

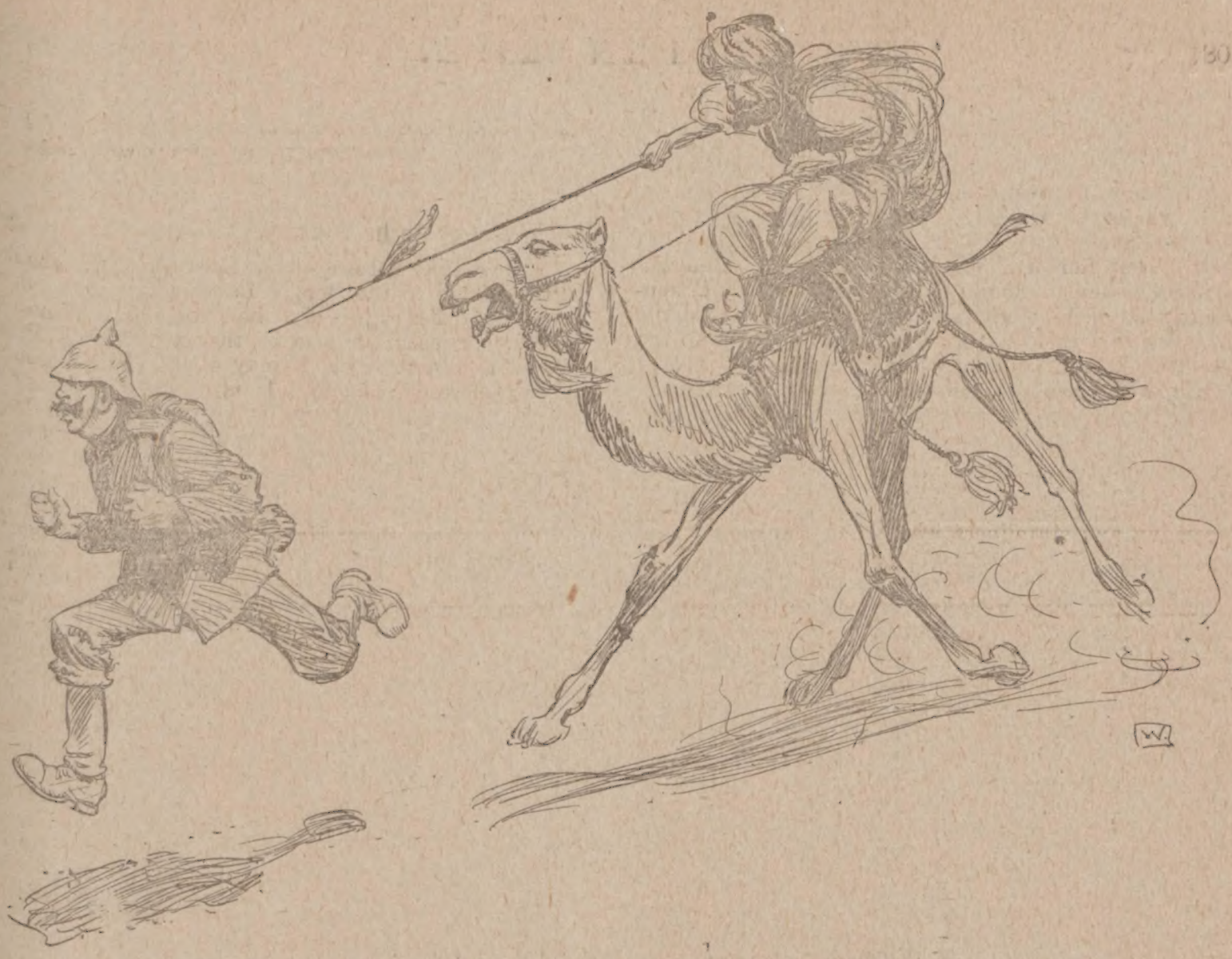
I love that little quip of Lord Curzon's about seeing "the lances of the Bengal Lancers fluttering down the streets of Berlin," and "the little dark-skinned Gurkha making himself at ease in the gardens at Potsdam." That is a picture which may strike many people as a lovely piece of imagery. It is nothing of the kind, however. There is nothing more probable than that Lord Curzon's picture will be a reality in every detail. From a very high source I learn that not only is the German Army doomed, but the Kaiser, as such, is doomed, too. It will amaze most people to learn that the fate of William-of-the-Burst-Head is not only sealed as German Emperor, but even as King of Prussia. In other words, when the end of the campaign comes with the Peace of Dresden (where I am informed it is likely to be signed by King George, the Tsar, and the French President in person, and upon the same table), it will decree first and foremost the degradation of the Hohenzollern family, and the appointment of another German reigning Prince—probably Hohenlohe—as Regent in Berlin on behalf of the Allies until such time as the Allies decide that Europe is once more unmenaced by any German state, and a new Monarchy may be set up in Prussia. It would, indeed, be the irony of ironies if King George were to appoint the dispossessed de jure King of Hanover (our Duke of Cumberland) to be the new King of Prussia! That surely would be sufficient to choke the Kaiser quite!

* * *

The Lessons Our War Office Has Got To Learn.

As I stated a fortnight ago, "the British Army will muddle through somehow"—*as usual*!—with crops of lessons to be learnt at the end—all of which will be

Chairman: "Gentlemen, we have so little time to spare to-day that we had better leave our minor items on the agenda and get into the important part of the meeting. Waiter, bring in the whiskey and soda."



The Viceroy has accepted . . . a camel corps from Bikanir.—(News item.)

The German: "Too much dashed Arabian Nights business about this for me."

eagely adumbrated by His Majesty's Royal Commissioners; duly committed to shorthand; carefully tied up with red tape; placed upon shelves in the War Office, and left there till they rot! One of the lessons is the absolute necessity of the troops being provided with field glasses, thus to save themselves being cut to pieces by ambushed troops into whose arms they have blindly walked. I know a gallant Major of Punjabis who is never tired of rubbing in the wickedness of the War Office in sending men into war, especially on the Indian frontiers, without some assistance to the eyes from science, owing to the eyes of Afghans being so accustomed to the hill distances that they find it child's play to catch a British force in a nullah, and cut them into mincemeat!

* * *

The Most Pathetic Aspect of the War.

The result of War Office cheese-paring in this matter is that when British troops are actually at death-grips with the Germans, it has to be left to a venerable ex-Commander-in-Chief of the British Army (Lord Roberts) to *appeal* to the public for the *gift* of a few hundred binoculars for the use of the troops in the field. Is it not the most pathetic spectacle the mind can conjure? Poor old Lord Roberts, knowing that the parsimony of the nation will see Sir J. French's force slaughtered wholesale before it will *order* the supply of field-glasses to every soldier (as is done by the Belgian War Office, by the way) writes letters to all the papers appealing for the gift of the said field-glasses! Isn't it enough to make one's hair stand on end?

* * *

"Officers With Brains."

Which reminds me that if our War Office is so effete in this respect, there are plenty of junior officers who could run the War Office better than it is run by the Field-Marshals and politicians. The officers of "The Buffs," to wit. As they ride about the lanes and shores of Kent you may notice a small map about ten inches square of England's danger spot—the Kentish coast—carefully framed in glass and wood, strapped to their backs, for immediate consultation whenever necessary. The map weighs more than a pair of binoculars, and the Buffs' officers carry the latter as well. *They* are not going to be caught napping, anyway. Kent has a dangerously gappy coast line of 150 miles, and the Buffs have got their work cut out at home, and they are doing their little whack with brains of a variety not supplied by the War Office.

* * *

"F. M. Viscount French of Roscommon, K.G."

When the time comes—and it will be long before the war is over—King George will recognise the marvellous manner in which Sir John French saved his force from what he calls impending "complete annihilation" by a peerage. When that is done, the famous Field-Marshal will be able to do his family rather a unique turn. Lord ffrench, whose only son died young, is in the position of having no second heir to his title, of which he is the sixth bearer. His only brother is best known in Jo'burg, and Lord ffrench himself has no "permanent place of abode," and two of his sisters are in a nunnery. The fortunes of Lord ffrench and his immediate relations are in a bad way, and the family is on the decline. From this unhappy state the gallant Field-Marshal can rescue his remote kin, though he is under no obligations to them at all, and probably does not know any of them, his branch of the family having broken away from the main stem centuries ago! But "Field-Marshal Viscount French of Roscommon, K.G.," etc., is by no means an improbability.

LIVELY LITTLE LEADERS.

THE GERMANS "ON THE RUN."

The war news at the moment of writing is the best we have had since the beginning of the grim struggle that is making history all over Europe. General Joffre reports that the retreat of the German army is incontestable and rapid, and the capture of a large number of guns by the Allies, in addition to a few thousands of prisoners, makes things, at any rate, a good deal better for us than they were a week or two ago. It only remains to be seen whether the Allied troops have sufficient vim and reserve force left in them, after the exhausting rearguard actions of the first period of the war, to pursue the retreating Germans with relentless determination. If they have, England and France and Russia will be able to congratulate themselves upon a brilliant success that may mean everything before the war is finished. In a word, after the miscalculations of the French staff in the matter of taking the offensive right at the commencement of the campaign, after the consequent weeks of retreating and the almost annihilation of the British troops under Smith-Dorrien, we have at last been able to turn the tables effectually for the present, and effectually, let it be hoped, for the future, too. We have got the Germans "on the run." If we are able to keep them there, with the added satisfaction that all the time we have the pleasure of seeing the Russians demolishing the Austrians and moving fairly rapidly towards Berlin, we shall be justified, without any of the vulgar braggadocio business, in doing a little mild shouting in honour of the good old flag that has had so many ups and downs in its glorious career, yet ever seems to fly aloft, even amid sorrow and defeat, with the supreme confidence of ultimate victory.

* * *

We are therefore, as I write, going along nicely—to put the state of things at the lowest. Yet it is at such a moment as this that it is the duty of those who write for the Press to warn the British public of the possibilities of the future. It is a long way too early to even begin to think of crowing the old optimistic tune that we are out of the wood. We've got a long way to go, as the song says. It's a long way to Tipperary, as our Tommies sang as they moved out of Boulogne to face the shells of the most highly-polished army the world has yet produced. Not yet, and perhaps not for a year or two, shall we see the triumphant march of our victorious troops past the palace of the King for whom and for whose country they are so gallantly fighting. Do not let us be pessimistic by any means. That way distraction and destruction lie. But do not let us be too optimistic either. When Pretoria fell into the arms of the British in the early part of the South African war we all thought that it was all up with the Boers. So it was, in a way. Nothing could save them. Nothing could save their country for them. Nothing could take from England the palm of ultimate victory. Yet the war dragged on and on till the Boers were compelled by absolute starvation to sign a treaty of peace—dragged on for well-nigh three years. Will the Germans fight to a finish, something like that? It is not likely, for that is not usually the way of civilised European nations in time of war. But we do not know. They may. In addition, the Germans may, and perhaps will, after a few weeks of rest and recuperation, again advance towards Paris, with successful strategy and unbounded luck. We do not know the chances that war may bring. War has been likened to a game of chess; at any rate, modern war. But there is more luck and chance in one day's warfare than there is in a hundred games of chess. Don't let us forget that, and don't let us forget that however many of the Germans may have been killed or taken prisoners on the field of battle, they have unlimited numbers of soldiers to fall back upon—soldiers who may in their millions confirm once again the saying of Napoleon that Providence is on the side of the big battalions.

And there we come right up against the weakest spot in our position at the present moment. The public are rightly delighted at the fact that Lord Kitchener has practically got his first half-million recruits for his new army. They are delighted, further, that Parliament has voted the money for another half-million. All this is well; all of it is splendid. But I think the general public are perhaps too prone to forget that raw recruits are not an army, and that at the very lowest sensible estimate it will take six or nine months to turn recruits into an army that is in any way fit to fight by the side of the British regulars now fighting and suffering so gallantly on French soil. Do not let us make any mistake about this. The spirit may be willing, yet the flesh weak, in matters of soldiering as well as in matters of religion. I myself saw our gallant volunteers in the South African war, and although they were only fighting against Boer farmers, I am bound to say that many of them were intensely disappointing in the actual work which they did in the fighting line. It is of no use to deny this, of no use to keep it in the background at this solemn time of day, when it would be fatal, above all things, to exaggerate our strength. How, then, will they be against such an army as the German army? Even in months of training (which our South African volunteers did not have, admitted) one cannot help (arguing from experience) feeling a wee bit diffident about Lord Kitchener's new army. They will be called Regulars, but they will not be Regulars either in training or shooting or discipline, even if twelve months elapse before ever they hear the whizzing of the German shells. That is not to say, of course, that they will not be an army of which all Britishers may be proud. But it does not do away with the fact that in future years our strength should lie in preparation for war in the years preceding war, and not in preparation after war has actually commenced. That seems to me to be the greatest lesson of this war, so far. And that Providence may so rule things during the coming weeks and months that the lesson shall not be rubbed in too hardly for us to bear, is the fervent hope of every Englishman at the present hopeful, yet still critical, stage of affairs.

JONATHAN GRUB STRETE.

"How our Fighting Men are Fed—Tit Bits." Little dainties pressed on them by the French, we suppose.

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During the first wave of "panic shopping," a lady of Hamilton Terrice, Maida Vale, purchased 100lbs. of dog-cake, presumably for the consumption of a toy pom., weighing exactly 1lb. 3½oz. This takes the biscuit.

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"Continual scheming and designing of fresh fashions to adorn the modern woman's head," says a Bond Street milliner, "is enough to turn anyone's brain." Now we know why the hatter was mad.

* * *

It is suggested that the ragtime "Everybody's doing it" can be straightened out into a march tune. But the busy recruiting officer has already appropriated this to himself.

* * *

A dear old lady who visited the wounded in hospital writes to express her delight at seeing one of the brave fellows reading a book by an author with the patriotic name of Victoria Cross.

* * *

"Silver is a drug in the market." Hence we may assume that it is bought and sold by apothecaries' weight.

* * *

The *Pall Mall Gazette* says that poetry should play a big part in the war. An argument in favour of those who predict a short campaign.

* * *

'Tis better to have loved and lost than to have to stand the costs of a breach of promise suit.

WHO, WHY, WHEN AND WHERE.

LITTLE QUESTIONS FOR PROMINENT PEOPLE.

Whether Viscount Mountgarret would not find an easy way out of some of his difficulties by following the example of Lord Buckinghamshire and "taking a pub"?

* * *

Whether the gentleman who offered to buy up the King's German uniforms for waxwork exhibition purposes has been successful in his quest?

* * *

Where Kaiser Wilhelm will go when he is cleared off the Prussian throne? And whether he will find asylum in Hanover?

* * *

Whether the hardest thrust of all will not be to find that the war has failed to affect King George's affection for his Imperial Majesty's brother Henry? And whether Prince Henry will not some day find himself the welcome guest in permanent exile of our own Royalties in this country?

* * *

Whether the wonderful harmony prevailing between King George and the Tsar is not entirely due to the Grand Duke Michael, who is called in by the King almost daily at Buckingham Palace?

* * *

Whether the war will bring that *rapprochement* to the family of Grand Duke Michael which will make his return to Petrograd possible, with his wife as a Russian countess, as well as a Countess of Luxembourg?

* * *

And whether there is a more tactful and diplomatic woman in Europe than the Grand Duke's charming wife, Countess Torby?

* * *

Whether Mr. Ned Wayburn has yet entered his libel action against a certain silly weekly?

* * *

Whether Sir Ernest Cassel has yet returned his German decorations to the Kaiser?

* * *

Whether Julia Marchioness of Tweeddale is not shortly going to the front?

* * *

Whether there is not more than a remote likelihood of a British Marchioness with a fourth husband ere long?

* * *

Whether the Queen of the Belgians has not sent private advice to her Bavarian relations as to their part in the war? And whether that advice is not tantamount to frank counsel to split from Germany instanter, and thus save the Wittelsbachs from absolute ruin?

* * *

Whether Bavaria will be fighting for Germany six weeks hence? And whether, even if the Bavarian King stands by his oath to the Deutsche Kaiser, his ruined toy-makers of all the Bavarian towns will not revolt?

* * *

Did the eminent newspaper proprietor rejoin the National Liberal Club only because he thought that at this crisis we should "sink all party differences"?

"Whist, Pat! Would yez fall on his riv'rince?"

Does Mr. Hall Caine now conclude that his long-deferred knighthood is a "dead cert."?

* * *

Whether the next Field-Marshal's bâton won't go to Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien?

* * *

If Louis Napoleon Parker is out to rival Henry Arthur Jones in the matter of writing letters to the Press re his plays?

* * *

If a number of people are still of the opinion that there was a distinct atmosphere of mystery surrounding the sudden death of the late Colonel Grierson?

* * *

Which of the great champagne firms is in imminent danger of closing down as a result of the war?

* * *

If anyone was surprised at General Smuts's statement as to "secret German designs" upon South Africa?

* * *

If the earlier closing of the "pubs" is not proving a good thing for the refreshment caterers at theatres and music-halls?

* * *

If the clumsy German forgery of a "speech" by Mr. Burns wasn't very silly to omit that statesman's stock phrase, "He builded better than he knew," and if the *Globe* isn't a little severe on the Right Hon. John?

* * *

Whether Lord Kitchener's flying visit to France has not had dire results for one or two French generals?

* * *

If the recruiting campaign in which certain of the Suffragette leaders are now engaging is not doing more towards furthering their cause than anything else up to date?

* * *

The identity of the actor-manager who has declared his willingness to go on tour so long as he does not lose more than £200 a week?

* * *

If a certain interesting theatrical engagement has been broken off because the bridegroom-to-be failed to enlist at the request of his fiancé?

* * *

The identity of the young Oxford undergraduate who has been posing as a "special war correspondent," and how many leading London newspapers he has succeeded in duping?

* * *

The precise object of the American journalist who has been supplying the newspapers of various neutral countries with such extraordinary and misleading items of news?

* * *

If the young peer who accompanied a lady friend to a West End rifle club for the purpose of "teaching her how to shoot" wasn't very sick indeed when he discovered that she could beat him "hands down"?

TABLOID TOPICS.

A pessimistic bookmaker reports "Business as Usual —Rotten."

* * *

On one side the Allies; on the other the All Lies. An "l" of a difference.

* * *

Frills are again coming into fashion—but only upon the outskirts of Society.

* * *

The new khaki tie decorated with a picture of a firing cannon is going great guns.

* * *

Although Sheffield produces fine cutlery, the Germans certainly make the best town razers.

* * *

If all goes well the German Army will presently be transformed into one huge Flying Corps.

* * *

The ammunition supply of the German Army is running out. And the Germans are running after it.

* * *

Grit is claimed to be the outstanding quality of Scotsmen. Certainly a great number of them are Sandy.

* * *

The Navy has taken over the Crystal Palace. Another proof of the panestaking qualities of our Jack Tars.

* * *

There has been some talk of firemen going to the front. To give the enemy socks with the hose, perhaps.

* * *

The Germans are determined to "keep their place in the sun." Already they are beginning to get their tanning.

* * *

The decision to abandon the annual oyster feast at Colchester was received by the natives with much rejoicing.

* * *

The rejection of muscular recruits who have the misfortune to wear spectacles seems to be rather a short-sighted business.

* * *

"Ever-growing Prince's Fund," proclaims the *Daily Mirror*. When will our newspapers recognise that the "Pragger Wagger" has become a man?

* * *

Complaint is made of the scarcity of Russian flags displayed in London. There is no excuse, as we have plenty of Russian Poles in the East End.

* * *

A British prize of war in Yarmouth had beans for its cargo. Our Expeditionary Force is understood to have taken the cargo as a present to the Germans.

* * *

"The North Sea 'Sweep,'" was a *Daily Telegraph* headline. We were wondering where all those enterprising gentlemen with Swiss addresses had got to.

* * *

The cut direct. A barber in the Commercial Road announces that "no Germans will be shaved at any price in this establishment." They'll probably get into scrapes without visiting the Commercial Road.

* * *

A teetotaller writes expressing appreciation of the action of the authorities, who, not content with the early closing of public-houses, have poured cold water on the idea of restoring Temple Bar to its old place in the Strand.

* * *

The war is causing quite a stir in the feathered world. Following on the white feather movement and the banning of homing pigeons, comes the cessation of the "Winged Words of To-day" column of a well-known evening paper.

A SOLDIER'S FAREWELL.

It was seeing the London Scottish march through Piccadilly Circus that first filled Victor with the glorious, enthusiastic fire of patriotism.

He was having tea at the "Cri" with a remarkably pretty girl when the men went by, and, with everyone else, he rushed to the doors to see them pass.

"Don't they look just splendid!" cried the pretty girl, catching hold of his arm and looking infinitely prettier with the light of excitement in her eyes. "I just love them!" That settled it!

"I'm going to enlist on Saturday," Victor said with a nonchalant air as they returned to their cold buttered toast. "A chap must do his best for his country!"

"Oh, Victor, are you really? Why didn't you tell me before?" And her look made Victor already feel a hero.

"Forgot all about it until those chaps went by."

"But—but you won't fight, will you?" she asked, and he had to look rather searchingly at her to see if the tremor in her voice was due to sorrow or amusement.

"Of course I shall. That's what I'm joining for. And I'm going in the ranks. They want athletic chaps there, you know—gives the others a bit of enthusiasm."

Now, Victor had at home a beautifully coloured and framed certificate won at school for swimming, so of course he knew all about athletics; besides, his garden backed on to a football ground!

The next day was Friday, and all day Victor went round filled with importance. He met a great many friends, and everybody was very good to him. They gave him many drinks and much good advice. He had a farewell lunch with Dorothy, a farewell tea with Phyllis quite early in the afternoon, and managed to get in another tea with Kitty later. Gladys he had only time to telephone, but he did manage to have a cup of coffee with Maud before seeing Grace off to Plymouth. Then he went to meet Ethel for supper.

To all these fair maidens he had to give a souvenir of his friendship, and to each he presented the "only photograph left" of himself in uniform—fancy dress!

But supper was really rather touching. There were six of them, and Victor had arrived at a state of melancholy from which they found it difficult to arouse him. He was not "funking" it, of course not. It was every man's duty to die for his country; it was a pleasure—in fact, he would be most annoyed if he came back alive.

He was certain he would be shot, and he made his will out there and then on the back of the menu. Then they arranged where they should have supper to celebrate his return. He wondered if it would be etiquette for a general to dine in full uniform in a London restaurant. Then, in spite of all opposition, he made a speech; at least he started off by saying he was going to, but speeches are better made standing than reclining under the table, so they pulled him out and propped him up in a chair while another man made the speech for him.

Then he gave all his money to the waiters, his gold watch to Ethel, his pearl tiepin to Daisy, his gold cigarette case to Leonard, the matchbox to Cecil. To Mabel and Reggie respectively he presented, with much solemnity, his silver fountain pen and his gold links, and he was awfully sorry because he had nothing of any value but his opera hat to leave for the manager and his boots for the chef.

Then he found a stray £10 note, and they careered about in a taxi until the recruiting station opened.

Then they wept on each other's necks and bade each other farewell, because by this time they were not at all certain who was going to the war.

Then Victor got out of the taxi with lordly stride, somewhat spoilt by a piece of orange skin, which, however, is not quite so disastrous when you have not got your boots on.

Then he offered his services to his King and country.

And then—his King and country refused to take him on account of his eyesight!

NOEL HINTON.

BANK OF ENGL
DAILY NEWS & LEADER OFFICES
MUDTOWN WATER WORKS
HOME FOR ELDERLY FEMALES
HIGH SCH FOR YOUNG LADIE
MR WILLIAM SYKES GUARDS THE BANK OF ENGLAND.
MR JOHN SHIFTIT ON A LONELY VIGIL AT THE LOCAL WATERWORKS.
LORD NORTHCLIFFE IS PUT ON POINT DUTY OUTSIDE THE OFFICES OF THE COCOA PRESS
THE HON. BILLY KNUT, WHO FANCIES HIMSELF A DOG WITH THE FAIR SEX, HAS TO UTILIZE HIS ENERGIES OUTSIDE A HOME FOR ELDERLY FEMALES — WHILE.
MR HENPECK — WHO HAS A LARGE WIFE & FAMILY AT HOME, IS PUT ON TO GUARD A YOUNG LADIES HIGH SCHOOL.
G.A.S

OUR SPECIAL CONSTABLES: Some anomalous positions.

BY THE WAY.

The story of the regimental shoeing-smith, armed only with his hammer, joining in the recent charge of the 6th Dragoon Guards, recalls the participation of the regimental butcher in the charge of the Light Brigade. He was actually killing a sheep when he heard the trumpets of his regiment (the 17th Lancers) ring out the charge. Jumping on a horse, with pipe still in his mouth, and in his shirt-sleeves, the valiant slaughterer straightway rode "into the Valley of Death," and killed six Russians with his own hand.

* * *

I learn from Sir Arthur Leetham that Col. John Vaughan, the distinguished head of the Cavalry School at Netheravon, is with the army in France, and that the "Cavalry Journal," of which he was editor, won't be issued again till "after the war," owing to its entire staff being at the front. Colonel Vaughan is, among other things, a D.S.O. of the South African war, and a magnificent polo player.

* * *

After the venerable Sir Pertab Singh, Patiala is the most interesting personality of the half-dozen Maharajahs serving with the Indian Expeditionary Force. He is the son of that horse-racing, cricket-loving Maharajah who used to engage Jack Hearne and Brockwell each winter as "coaches." On one occasion His Highness laid heavy wagers that "Ranji" wouldn't make more runs than K. M. Mistri, the Parsee batsman. The latter scored 255, and "Ranji" (not out) 257, whereupon the delighted Maharajah gave him a pair of valuable sporting guns and some superb diamond studs. Another time, Sir R. S. S. Baden-Powell, Sir Arthur Priestley, M.P., and Ranjitsinhji were guests at Patiala for pig-sticking, and the adventure nearly ended fatally for the latter. His horse threw him into some thorn-bushes, in which predicament he was attacked and badly gored by an aged boar, "Priestley Sahib" narrowly escaping with his life.

* * *

Before the German prisoners at Olympia were removed on Monday, an interested—but to them unknown visitor—was Mr. John Burns, until recently President of the Local Government Board. "Well," said "honest John," looking round at the very poor and stodgy lot of captive Teutons, "if this is what comes of conscription, we don't need a stronger argument against it in this country."

* * *

The prisoners in question have been removed from the great show-place at Olympia to a racecourse somewhere in England, which I will not at this moment particularise. There they will continue to be kept under armed guard until the war is over. Among them, it is interesting to note, is an alleged German count, who is able to provide himself with many luxuries denied to his fellow prisoners. He is not the only one of his rank among the captives, but counts in Germany can be met with as frequently as sauerkraut.

* * *

Among the ladies working on behalf of the wounded—and by working I mean secretarial and other actual humdrum employment—is to be found that gracious lady, Queen Amelie of Portugal, whose indefatigable interest in the cause of the Red Cross is not surpassed by the Duchess of Devonshire, who has so kindly placed her residence at the disposal of the Society, nor any of the English ladies who find so much to do there. Donna Amelie is invariably seen now in extremely simple habit of black, and she seems never to have lost the pathetic memory of that terrible tragedy through which it was her lot in life to pass not many years ago.

* * *

Dom Manoel, it will be remembered, recently offered his sword to the King, but in view of his recent German marriage—to say nothing of his pre-matrimonial alliances with ladies of other nationalities—it has not been accepted.

* * *

The other day, I heard of an incident which bears remarkable evidence as to the shoddy patriotism possessed by the misguided females, and others, who are responsible for the "White Feather" movement. A young friend of mine was approached by a certain wealthy dame and asked why a stalwart young Englishman like himself had not enlisted. Said he, "I shall be delighted to, if you'll support my wife and child in comfort till I come back; and you're quite wealthy enough to be able to do so, for I know who you are." The good lady's patriotism was not equal to the task, and she retired discomfited. This happened at Folkestone, which town, by the way, is crowded with well-dressed young Frenchmen of "fighting" age. They parade the front in groups of five and six, and their gay talk and laughter can be heard in all directions. I make no comment on this state of things, but simply record a fact which my wife and myself could not help noticing during a visit to Folkestone a few days ago.

* * *

For grim, unconscious humour the following extract from the *Daily Mail's* column, booming the patriotic song, "Your King and Country Want You,"

THE ADAPTABLE TEUTON.

There are still numerous German waiters in our midst, who endeavour by their dress and manners to pass themselves off as Britons.

needs a lot of beating. No doubt you have all heard the song somewhere or other, and you will therefore appreciate the quotation as much as I do:

"A woman writes: 'Please send me a copy of the song, which I want to sing to the soldiers in the hospitals.'"

Let us hope that the "woman's" voice is more cultivated than her sense of tactfulness!

* * *

I am as patriotic as most people, though I must confess I have always had a distaste for the flag-wagging brand of patriotism, but I do draw the line at having all the National Anthems of all the Allies fired at me every time I go into a restaurant to dine. It is a nuisance having to drop your serviette and your soup-spoon and rise to your feet what time the orchestra ploughs through the tunes at a funereal pace, and though one may be ready to die for one's country, it doesn't follow that one wants that death hastened by having to eat food which has got cold, and consequently indigestible. I trust various and sundry of the West End restaurants will consider this mild protest.

* * *

There is no doubt that Germany in provoking war with England reckoned on internal dissensions putting our army out of gear, and also believed that she could dodge our navy. Shattered dreams! Really though, the Kaiser had some trifling foundation for the latter hallucination. He believed implicitly in the reports of his spies here who, however, were not above "puling his leg"—especially when they were short of money. Thus it was that he received the most thrilling reports of the last two years' naval manœuvres. In 1912 eighteen ships managed to get past a defending fleet of twenty-nine—and landed nearly 30,000 men in Yorkshire. Last year there was ever a more sensational result, for Jellicoe landed something like 50,000 men. All this was tremendously exaggerated by the spies, who assured the Kaiser that upwards of 100,000 men had "invaded" our shores. As a matter of fact, that would be entirely impossible unless our fleet was first smashed up. Certainly it would be useless to send a force less than 100,000 strong.

* * *

The Boy Scouts are certainly "making good." A day or two ago the lodge-keeper of a London reservoir thought he heard a suspicious noise. It was late at night but, slipping on an overcoat, he emerged to face the intruder. Just as he was proceeding up the bank four bodies flashed through the air, he was sent head over heels, and a second later was pinned to the ground with four staves stretched across his body. The Scouts had made a capture! Now the worthy keeper leaves the defence of the reservoir entirely in the hands of the boys.

* * *

The absurd weekly which issued a "contents-bill" last week, "Send the Irish Guards," must feel silly when it peruses the stories of the gallant deeds of the Irish Guards and other Irish regiments at Compiegne—and since! The regiments from Erin have been doing just the sort of work one would expect when they are being led by an Irish Field-Marshal, whose own relations are also right "in the thick of it." In one fight alone the Royal Irish Regiment lost fifteen officers, while another, Lieut. ffrench, is still missing. How many men were lost in this terrible melee I forget, but it was as near as no matter a clean "cut up," the R.I.R. being practically led into a trap, from which they emerged only by a hair's breadth, and solely through their amazing courage and bull-dog failure to realise when they were beaten! The sons of Erin have done some wonderful things already; by the time they arrive in Berlin they will have covered themselves with glory!

* * *

But the Irish Guards have done it already. In all the future history of this appalling war there is likely to be no grander chapter than that which narrates the story of the Irish Guards on the first occasion that they have been under fire in Europe. The Irish Guards, who hadn't had a wash for four days, were caught by the Germans whilst having a welcome "sloosh" in the river at Compeigne. Instantly the Irish stood to attention, and the German cavalry came on at a brisk pace. An eye-witness records the rest "As soon as their guns and infantry had taken up a position the cavalry came along in a huge mass, with the intention of riding down the Irish Guards, who were nearest to them. When the shock came it seemed terrific to us in the distance, for the Irishmen didn't recoil in the least, but flung themselves right across the path of the German horsemen. We could hear the crack of the rifles and see the German horses impaled on the bayonets of the front rank of the Guardsmen.

* * *

"Then the whole force of infantry and cavalry were mixed up in one confused heap, like so many pieces of a jig-saw puzzle. Shells from the British and German batteries kept dropping close to the tangled masses of fighting men, and then we saw the German horsemen get clear and take to flight as fast as their horses could carry them. Some had no horses, and they were bayonetted where they stood. . . . Taking advantage of the fight between the cavalry and infantry, the German artillery had advanced to a new position, from which they kept up a deadly fire from twelve guns. Our infantry and cavalry advanced simultaneously against the new position, which they carried together in the face of a galling fire . . . . When our men captured the guns there was hardly a German left alive or unwounded, while the fight had lasted seven hours."

Thus gloriously have the Irish Guards justified their existence in their first battle against white men!

THE LOITERER.

Mrs. Onlooker: "There is the rich American heiress who stays at our hotel. They say she has twelve trunks full of dresses."

Mr. Onlooker: "Whoever would have thought it?"

An epigram is any remark which has sufficient truth in it to justify the fallacy which makes it piquant.

MORE OR LESS.

Not Likely.

We live in an age of manifesting and manifesto (if the present state of things goes on we shall soon be manless as well), but perhaps the funniest manifesto of all is that issued by no less than eighty German societies to Teutonic womankind. It urges them to abstain in this serious time from the "bad habits and dressing of the French demi-monde, to behave nicely, and be modest, sensitive and dignified, making themselves respected alike by friends and enemies!" Ahem! I am supposed to have a vivid imagination, but even my imagination strikes at the thought of a worthy hausfrau in the frock of a Liane de Pougy, and with the white plumes of a blameful life dangling from an irreproachable plait. The average Gretchen was never cut out for vine-leaves. The humble daisy is associated with her even in her moments with Faust, and the very thought of her entering into competition with Lolotte of Maxim's is enough to make the person even slightly acquainted with the habits of feminine Berlin smile. Masculine Berlin may have been proved a savage, but his wife still remains a pincushion.

* * *

The Tearful Flame.

It was like a whiff of heather-scented air to read just now that two of "Bonnie Prince Charlie's" embroidered waistcoats have been offered for sale. Others are on show now, and any sentimental person is at liberty to go and gaze upon their faded glories, and wonder whether the Flora who loved him so well worked lovingly at their beautifying, and whether a tear dropped now and then upon the velvet as her white fingers played among the coloured silks. I don't know, I am sure, why women's love should so often be associated with women's tears, unless it is the fact that they are so apt to erect a granite rock of sentiment out of a little flirtation dust. It is so silly to expect a man to be faithful for ever just because he has kissed you. A kiss to a man generally only means a "miss," but a kiss to a woman nearly always means a mis-understanding. Have you ever heard of that recipe for a happy life, written by Margaret of Navarre somewhere about the year 1500? She said "that it is best to use of love's magic drops a few, but sparingly, for they bring flame, which nought but tears can drown," and tears are such useless things. You can take it from me that the average man would sooner face a tiger than a tearful woman. After all, a bullet can settle a tiger, or, if that fails, the tiger can settle him, but a tearful woman is a proposition no self-respecting male cares to be up against, especially if he has any regard for his coat.

MAKING LOVE.

* * *

Cartridges and Caresses.

It seems an awfully superfluous thing to be a woman nowadays. All the people who are doing things seem to regard one as a perfect nuisance, and even those who confine their actions to criticisms draw maps among the wineglasses when they take you out to dinner. It's a hard knock for the woman who, up to now, has regarded herself as indispensable, to have to take a back seat, as far as attention is concerned, and to discover that a man's intentions—an anxious problem at best—centre round cartridges instead of caresses. It's a good thing, really, there are to be no autumn fashions, for we would only be running up bills for nothing. At least, that is my opinion, for I have always held that we women dress to please the men—for no other reason. Eve was perfectly content with her fig-leaf, because she had no competition to fear as regards Adam; but if she had lived in these days I can't help thinking she wouldn't have been so economical. This is an age of competition, and it's the well-dressed, not the best, woman who wins.

* * *

Damp Love.

I saw a young girl crying just before I came in to write this. I asked her what was the matter. The usual pathetic little story, of course. Her young man was off to the war. And I had just come from another girl who had broken off her engagement because her young man wouldn't go to the war. She was crying, too. And I am sure that all over the country other girls are crying for one or other of these reasons. Oh! this love! What an over-rated thing it is. We're never happy till we get it, and then we're perfectly miserable. I wish people would realise that love isn't all the map, as they seem to think it is, but just a little island of make-believe surrounded by a whole sea of trouble.

* * *

Popes and Platitudes.

We hear a lot about the cruelty of women in wearing ospreys, but what about the cruelty of men? Are you aware—I wasn't till yesterday, when I read it somewhere—that the white *soutanes* worn by the popes are woven by Roman nuns from the wool of unborn sheep, and that a flock of fifty sheep is kept for the purpose of serving as wardrobes to the Vatican. And then people talk of women being selfish and vain. Why, they're not in it with men. And when you come to think of it, the awful waste for popes to walk about in lambs' wool. What's the matter with a hair-shirt? But I have long since come to the conclusion that a man cares more for his appearance than he does for appearances, while a woman will nearly always give up everything for the latter. Lace curtains and late dinner are the alpha and omega of the suburban lady's soul, whereas her lord and master would sacrifice the whole domestic economy upon the altar of a tail-coat or a new top-hat. There are instances I know of men preferring to look like tramps, but this is only another species of vanity. I have known a duke to be childishly pleased because a tripper took him for the gardener and gave him half-a-crown.

LOUISE HEILGERS.

PLAYING THE GAME.

In the grey light of dawn Private Macgregor found himself amongst the foremost in a wild Highland bayonet charge. All the primeval instincts of his Pictish forefathers surged within him, and for a space it seemed very good to fight thus—lunge, as the steel went home; then jerk and twist, as the hot, wet blade unsheathed itself. But something must have happened to Private Macgregor here, for he dropped in a lifeless heap, leaving his comrades to sweep onward over his prostrate body.

When next he was able to take note of things he found that his head ached very painfully indeed; and all was not well with his left leg. He found he was wounded in the thigh.

Lying a little distance away he saw the bodies of one or two German soldiers. "Nary a kilt to be seen," muttered Private Macgregor with pride. But the silence that was over all disturbed him. It was not pleasant to be left alone thus, helpless, with a leg he could not move without suffering intense agony; and dead men for company.

A sudden rustling in the grass made him turn his head. Someone else in the land of the living—a German soldier.

"Hullo, old man," said Macgregor; "hurt bad?" A quick thought made him smile grimly. Neither he nor the German knew or ever would know who had "hurt" them, but . . . .

The German was too fully occupied to reply in any way. He was trying to crawl nearer to Private Macgregor; and that Highlander's sympathetic interest suddenly became tinged with amazement when he noticed that the other was dragging his bayoneted rifle with him.

"I say, old man, it's all right. Leave your sticker behind."

Still the German struggled on, and in his eyes was something the Britisher did not like. He could have wept from annoyance at the other's foolishness. Why carry their enmity so far? What did it matter, any way? They were such little pawns—such little, little pawns in this great game.

"Don't be an ass, man," pleaded Macgregor.

It was clear the German had no bullets in his possession; or was it that perhaps he felt in cold steel was greater credit and delight to the player of the winning game? There was something devilish in the man's intensity of purpose. On he came.

The Highlander closed his eyes. He didn't care. He was tired and sleepy, and faint and weak, and couldn't use his bayonet to save his own life. He didn't care, any way. And Mrs. Macgregor——

"Here, you quit that," said Private Macgregor suddenly. "I'm strong enough to press the trigger of this gun, and it's loaded. So stay where you are."

The other heeded not. As he strove to use the steel the Highlander fired.

The German, "'e gave nothin' 'cept a little, coughin' grunt," but that grunt made Macgregor very sick. He crawled over.

"Poor devil," he said. "You poor, poor devil." His voice was fraught with infinite sadness. Perhaps this still thing on the ground had a Mrs. Macgregor at home, perhaps—no! God forbid.

After a little time the German moved. His eyes opened slowly, and as they fell on the motionless figure sitting at his side their leaden depths lit with intelligence, then glared with immortal hate. A shaking, feeble hand tried to grasp a bayoneted rifle.

"Aw—chuck it, old man," implored Macgregor, as one might speak to a fractious child. "What's the good?"

In truth, he was deeply shocked; for Private Macgregor had a soul. Deep within himself he was intensely religious—though had you told him so he would have called you many ugly names—and it did not seem well to him that anyone should trifle thus on the brink of death.

"What do we matter, you and I? *Sie gehen heim.* You're going home, old man."

Macgregor did not know German well, but somehow he guessed the quickly-spoken gutturals that answered him meant: "Then you'll come with me, by Gott!" But life was ebbing fast now, and the German's weak body could not carry out the fierce desire of the fiery spirit which it housed. The breath rattled in his body, and the mouth was parched.

Hastily examining his water-bottle, the Highlander found there was left a little liquid. Bending over the other he held the bottle to the dry lips, while into the German's face came a look of blank astonishment. Then it faded. The head was swung quickly to one side; and the dry lips were still dry.

Private Macgregor regarded him for a silent space. "So you won't," he said at last. "You'll stick me with your bay'net; you'll kill me if you can; but if you fail, well; you won't drink my water. . . . I don't respect you less, old man."

Maybe an hour after, when they found him, he was still sitting by the body of the dead German, brooding, trying to unravel the knot of human death and fate. . . .

"How are you, Mac?" said the doctor.

"I feel bad. I think I'm done."

The doctor hastily examined his wounds. "Done! Don't be crazy, man!" he cried indignantly. "You'll be up and doing in a week or two."

So, as they prepared to carry him away, the Highlander turned his head towards the huddled form of the German soldier.

"What's *he* been doing?" asked the doctor, following the direction of the other's eyes.

"Playing the game, sir. . . . Old man," said Private Macgregor. "I've won!"

ERIC DE BANZIE.

THE SACRIFICE.

Adolphus turned uneasily on the grass in St. James's Park, as the sun's rays fell on his khaki-coloured neck. Rising to his feet, he shuffled off in the direction of the Admiralty Arch—a quaint figure of a man, young in years, but prematurely aged by inertia.

Near the archway his attention was arrested by a small crowd of youths gazing at a striking poster of a gallant Highland soldier at bay. With set teeth and the light of battle in his fearless eyes, the hero stood, game to the last, whilst all around raged war's dread inferno. Superimposed was a quiet scene of rural England, with a ploughman and his team at work on a breezy upland. The whole was surmounted by the Union Jack and the words: "Englishmen! Enlist and protect your homes!"

Adolphus looked long and intently. Memories of the village of his boyhood days rose before him, and then came visions of murderous Uhlans laying waste the peaceful countryside. Unconsciously he straightened up his ramshackle frame, and a faint touch of colour showed for a moment on his dirty, unshaven cheeks. He clenched his fists, and, muttering hoarsely, "I'm 'anged if I don't go and do it!" walked sharply away in the direction of the recruiting offices in Whitehall.

A little way down that thoroughfare stood a vendor of flags of all nations. Adolphus stopped, and, producing a penny—the only one he had been able to cadge that morning—purchased a Union Jack, stuck it in his ragged coat, and—returned to St. James's Park by way of the Horse Guards and resumed his interrupted siesta.

FRANK MERCHANT.

Everybody in the world would be rich if men would resist spending ten shillings to celebrate the five shillings they have saved by practising economy.

IN STAGELAND.

Apropos of Sir G. Alexander's acceptance "in forty-eight hours" of "Michael Orme's" (Mrs. J. T. Grein) new comedy, Sir George's popular manager, Mr. Hunt-Helmsley, informs me that at the St. James's they "sit in judgment"—no pun intended—on at least five hundred plays per annum. "In a good many cases, of course," added Mr. Helmsley, with a naughty little twinkle, "you can make up your mind about a piece after turning the first page or so."

* * *

As dear old Jaikes in "The Silver King" ("his original part," as the playbills phrase it), dear old Arthur Williams actually attains his *thousandth* rôle since he "commenced actor" in the 'sixties. Just think of it! Mr. Williams is also about to celebrate his seventieth birthday. People are apt to forget that he has been a notable singer as well as actor, as witness his memorable Lurcher in "Dorothy," and innumerable other vocal impersonations.

* * *

When Haddon Chambers wrote or adapted "Tante," now renamed "The Impossible Woman," he told us he was unaware that he had been working on the lines of Anne Douglas Sedgwick's popular romance (but "we don't always call them 'coincidences,'" as the literary gent. cynically said). Anyway, Mr. Chambers' play has been produced with some success at the Haymarket. It owes not a little to the fine acting of Lillah McCarthy as the "impossible" musical genius around whose machinations the plot centres, of Godfrey Tearle, and of Hilda Bayley as Madame's ward, the hapless Karen Woodruff. The piece should be seen, for Chambers' work is always interesting. He once told me, by-the way, that he would never adapt another novel, but he has evidently "broken the pledge." Miss McCarthy raps out her "damns" in the most spirited fashion, but her playing of the grand piano is too obviously being done by somebody "off."

* * *

In "Seven Keys to Baldpate," at the Apollo, Chas. Hawtrey adds one more to the large number of American-made farcical pieces that have been "brought over." Baldpate is a sequestered inn, of which William Hallowell McGee, the novelist (Hawtrey), fondly thinks he possesses the only key, whereas half-a-dozen other people also have keys to the old place. Among these is an exceedingly pretty lady journalist, charmingly played by Miss Doris Lytton. The plot (?) turns upon one of those wagers dear to Hawtrey's heart, and though it is all very impracticable, it is wondrously light-hearted. Charles himself is, as ever, drollest of the droll, and so also is George Tully.

* * *

Dennis Eadie and Gladys Cooper have now resumed the interrupted run of "My Lady's Dress," so if you did not get to the Royalty during the summer I think you should do so now. Certainly the succession of "dream-scenes" are highly diverting and beautifully acted.

* * *

At His Majesty's—whence Sir Herbert has been able to send some gratifying news alike to the Prince's Fund and to Sir Squire Bancroft—Miss Evelyn Millard is now the Queen Elizabeth of "Drake." Naturally, she gives a wholly different reading from her predecessor's version, but it is a version (and a vision!) of sheer delight and of supreme intelligence. Sir H.B.T. is to be congratulated on having the reversion of Miss Millard's services, and her promised Agnes in "David Copperfield" is being eagerly anticipated.

* * *

A second visit to "Tommy Atkins" reveals the fact that the audience alone is worth going a long way to see. Night after night the Lyceum's great circle, pit and gallery are simply a sea of faces, constituting an audience that may well gladden the hearts of the management that so opportunely staged this revival.

Members of "the" profession, other than Robert Loraine, who are now serving their country in some capacity or other include Halliwell Hobbes, George Barrett, Stafford Hilliard, Scott Craven, Bertram Forsyth, Chas. Macdona, Rathmell Wilson, Royce Carleton, etc. Also a son of Frank Desprez, editor of the "Era," and several members of the "Era" staff. Also the acting-managers and stage managers of several London and provincial theatres and variety houses.

* * *

Music-hall patriotism, like music-hall politics, is inclined to be boring at times, and I am not at all sure that the patriotic song business is not being considerably overdone. The difficulty is that we do not often get the necessary combination of a good singer and a good song, but usually a poor singer murdering a song or a good singer struggling to put life into a song which is dead, or never ought to have been born. The Pavilion this week have one good item in the midst of a shockingly poor programme—the patriotic song, "Roll Up," written and composed by that tuneful Australian, Mr. A. Emmett Adams. It has a fine swing about it, and is well sung by an Australian baritone, Herbert Ratcliffe, who made his first appearance in London on Monday night, and had to take no fewer than nine "calls" after his spirited rendering of "Roll Up."

Mr. George Edwardes is a prisoner of war in Austria. This form of retaliation for his numerous captures of Viennese musical comedy strikes us as rather severe.

* * *

Gifts of slippers for our men are being received by several charitable organisations. They should find them useful after they have given the Germans the boot.

* * *

"It is interesting to note that in 1702 Marienburg Castle and its chapel were restored and dedicated by the present Kaiser."—*Manchester Guardian.*

So it may be that his madness is simply due to senile decay.

* * *

An inquisitive lady writes to ask if there is any truth in the reply given her by a sentry on guard at a gas-works that he was there to prevent the escape of gas.

* * *

A large consignment of frozen pigs' trotters has arrived in Paris. But the inhabitants are in no danger of suffering from cold feet.

* * *

A soldier writing home from the front says that in one battle the Germans were slaughtered like sheep. Like Uhlambs, in fact.

* * *

The officer in command of one of our submarines, while waiting on the sea-bottom until dark to escape the enemy, said he passed the time at bridge. No British officer would desert the bridge in the presence of danger.

* * *

Stringent regulations for the sale of alcohol have been established in Russia, and they will be strictly enforced—in the letter as well as the spirit.

Soccer Cigarette Competition.

No. 1.

In the first Football Competition promoted by the Soccer Cigarette Co., of 56 and 58, Wardour Street, W.C., no competitor was successful in forecasting 12 correct results. Several gave nine correct. The best coupon received gave 10 correct results, and came from

Mr. George S. Coster,
3, Barbican,
London, E.C.,

to whom the Consolation Prize of £50 has been paid.

OURSELVES AND OTHER PEOPLE.

First Nut: "Say, Freddy, old boy, I'm going to petition the Town Council. Can't stand this sort of thing any longer."

Second ditto: "What's up now, old chap?"

First ditto: "Why, on windy days there are lots of chances to see the girls' ankles, but the wretched dust won't let a fellow open his eyes to look."

* * *

Host (whose whiskey is not very first-rate): "What, no more? Afraid of it, perhaps? The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak, eh?"

Guest: "No, the flesh is willing, but the spirit is weak."

* * *

Bobbie: "Why are your whiskers so thin on the right side of your face, Mr. Jones?"

Mr. Jones: "Oh, that's because I always sleep on my right side and that rubs the hair away."

Bobbie: (thinking of his father who is bald): "Well, but Papa doesn't stand on his head when he is asleep."

* * *

EXTRA INDUCEMENT.

Auto Demonstrator (who has been trying for three hours to sell the car): Now I will throw in the clutch.

Uncle Eben: I'll take the machine, then. I knew if I held off long enough ye'd give me something to boot.

—*Puck.*

* * *

We have all heard of the importation of foreign machinery for putting wrinkles in tripe. An equally remarkable textile process seems to be indicated in the following notice seen on an Italian merchant's barrow the other day:—"Ice cream friezed by electricity and made under sanitary approvement."

—*Manchester Guardian.*

ALL THE DIFFERENCE.

Robson: "What do you call your baby, Johnson?"

Johnson: "Day or night?"

—*Sydney Bulletin.*

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